Coal Projects to be financed by the erstwhile USSR

453. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the three coal projects in India which were to be financed by the erstwhile USSR, have been seriously and adversely hit because of break-up of that country ; and

(b) if so, shat steps have Government taken to ensure the smooth working of those projects?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) There are three on-going coal mining projects viz. Khadia Opencast (Northern coalfields Ltd.), Nigahi Opencast (Northern Coalfields Ltd.) and Jhanjra Underground (Eastern Coalfields Ltd.) and one non-mining project viz. Modernisation of Patherdih Washery (Bharat Coking Coal Ltd.) of Coal India Ltd., financed by the erstwhile USSR. The recent events in USSR have created certain uncertainities in the supply of equipment as well as spare parts for Soviet manufactured equipment. However, it is not likely that this will have serious adverse effect on the implementation of these projects, as negotiations would be held with successor Governments.

(b) The following intermediate steps are being taken to ensure the smooth working of these projects:—

(i) Major assemblies/sub-assemblies of Soviet manufactured equipment are beng planned to be replaced with indigenously manufactured assemblies.

(ii) Indigenisation of spare parts to the extent possible is being undertaken.

(iii) Direct contacts with Soviet Manufacturers are being made to obtain critical spares instead of limiting it to the Trading Houses of Russia.

(iv) Parallel arrangements for procuring future equipment for these projects from other sources are also being made as felt necessary.

Closure of coal mines

454. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Coal India Limited propose to close down a large number of coal mines;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) At present Coal India Limited have no proposal to close down a large number of coal mines.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

455. [*Transferred to the 6th March*, 1992]

Revision in the rates of royalty on Coal and Lignite

456. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an upward revision of royalty on coal;

(b) whether such revision in royalty has been made applicable to lignite also; and

(c) if so, since when and what are the increased rates of royalties ?